

IV. **Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)**

Claims 1 – 2, 4 – 10, and 12 – 14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Harris (WO 95/19974) in view of Aldrich (page 811, 1999). The Examiner states that the claimed compounds differ from those of Harris because the R₂ of the claimed compounds is para-fluorobenzene rather than meta-bromobenzene. The Examiner also states that this substitution would have been obvious in view of Aldrich.

Applicants respectfully assert that, in addition to the para-fluorobenzene, the claimed compounds also differ from Harris because they are only partially alkylated, whereas those of Harris are fully alkylated. Harris does not teach or suggest partially alkylated compounds. Referring to page 8, lines 14 – 36 of Harris, R₁₂ is H or CH₂CO₂M. Thus, all R₁₂ groups are either H or CH₂CO₂M. In the present invention, all of the R₁ groups are not the same. At least one R₁ group is H and the other R₁ groups are CH₂CO₂K.

Furthermore, it is submitted that the problems associated with the complex step of selective alkylation during the synthesis of the compounds (which the skilled person would appreciate) teaches away from the formation of partially alkylated compounds according to the present invention. Thus it would not be obvious to the skilled person in light of the disclosure of Harris in view of Aldrich to prepare partially alkylated compounds according to the present invention.

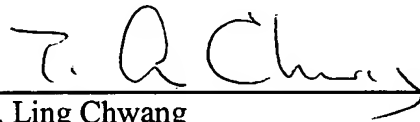
In light of the above reasons, it is submitted that Claims 1 – 2, 4 – 10, and 12 – 14 are not obvious in light of the combined teachings of Harris and Aldrich.

V. Conclusion

Applicants respectfully submit that, in light of the foregoing Amendment and comments, Claims 1 – 4, 7 – 9, and 11 – 15 are in condition for allowance. A Notice of Allowance is therefore requested.

If the Examiner has any other matters which pertain to this Application, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned to resolve these matters by Examiner's Amendment where possible.

Respectfully submitted,



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